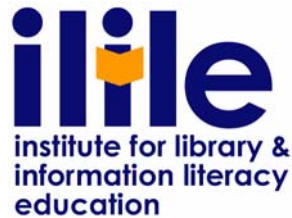


FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

National Research Grant

**Creating Partnerships:
A Collaborative Information Literacy Program**



**Institute for Library and Information
Literacy Education (ILILE)
Kent State University**

December 2004

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**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT – FINAL NARRATIVE
 REPORT
 Creating Partnerships:
 A Collaborative Information Literacy Program**

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BUDGET REPORT:

Date	Budget Item	Amount	Total submitted to ILILE
	Submitted to ILILE		
	Project Total:		

ILILE National Grant Award Final Narrative Report

1. Description of Program

The School Library Media Specialists of Woodbridge Township, Woodbridge, NJ believe it essential that new teachers recognize (a) how collaboration with the school library media specialist impacts student achievement, and (b) how collaboration with the school library media specialist can enhance the success rate of those new to the profession. Our goal was to prove that by targeting teachers new to the profession, or the school and/or district, we would be creating an opportunity to build a practice of collaboration into the

teaching process. Looking into the future, these same teachers will some day be called upon to mentor the next group of new teachers; hopefully part of their mentoring message will include the impact of the school library media center upon student achievement, and the importance of collaboration between the School Library Media Specialist (SLMS) and the classroom teacher in enhancing student achievement.

2. Purpose of Program

Our project was based upon Gary Hartzell's article *Indirect Advocacy* in the May/June 1999 issue of **Book Report**. Our goal was to build an indirect advocacy base of teachers who are effective library and information users, open to true collaboration with the SLMS, in order to promote student achievement. By continuing the project every year with the new incoming faculty the advocacy base will grow. The desired long-term result of this project should be an increase in support and funding for the school library media program in this district.

What really motivated us is the opportunity to take a real role in an action research project. We will be focusing on select teachers and recording data to determine how to best foster collaboration in each of our buildings. SLMS from the three levels – high school, middle school and elementary school – are participating in all phases of the project. In addition to inviting targeted faculty to a building level professional development program, we proposed that the school library media program be part of the new teacher orientation workshops. We also offered professional development programs on a district-wide level at our Summer Tech Academy and Fall Professional Development Academy.

3. Goals and Objectives

The main goal of the project was to create a culture of collaboration by engaging teachers new to the profession and/or new to the school facility to which they were assigned. The secondary goal was to construct an understanding within this group of teachers that school library media specialists and school library media programs enhance student learning; thereby creating an impact on student achievement.

4. Activities/Methods

Upon receipt of the grant we sent surveys to targeted teachers in each of our schools:

- 5 were targeted at the elementary level, which totaled 80 teachers.

- 8 were targeted at the middle school level, which totaled 40 teachers.
- 10 were targeted at the high school level, which totaled 30 teachers.

Survey questions ranged from knowledge of research, literature, and information literacy to participant's perception of the program. After the surveys were completed, the SLMS held some informal information gathering sessions with as many of the participants as were available for meeting.

In the Fall of 2004 participants at each of the buildings were targeted to be interviewed by the Supervisor of Media Centers. This was done in a one-on-one verbal interview. A total of 52 teachers were interviewed. Questions were geared to determine:

- Perceived positive aspects of the SLMC program
- Pitfalls to SLMC usage and collaboration with the SLMS on the part of the teacher
- What changes, if any, did the teacher see in the SLMC program this year
- What changes, if any, did the teacher think are needed and/or wanted in the SLMC program
- What changes may have occurred in the teacher's perception of the SLMC program
- Understanding of the term "Information Literacy" with a definition

Another means of collecting data was the SLMS log of class visits that identifies classes in which collaboration took place between the teacher and SLMS.

5. Research/Outcomes

143 of the surveys were returned. The results showed:

- Teachers who had some training/education within college programs claimed to understand "Information Literacy" and the role of the LMC and SLMS.
- Teachers coming in alternate route, or from colleges/universities not having "schools of education" had a totally different perspective.
- All teachers wish the LMC had greater access to "computer workstations" allowing for one computer per student (current ratio is 1:6)
- In the 12 elementary schools serviced by a SLMS with a split schedule, teachers do not use the LMC for "research projects" only for book exchange and very quick 30-minute lessons each week.

Of the 52 teachers interviewed 4 (7%) teachers could not identify any positive aspects of the LMC program. Of all 52 teachers interviewed, 3 (5%) indicated they were not comfortable using the SLMC because the "SLMS is not helpful." Not surprisingly, this is in a school where there is a very real problem with the SLMS. There are also 4 (2%) identical answers in the written survey.

100% of those teachers surveyed and interviewed indicated that more computers are needed in the SLMC. Again, this is not an answer that surprises us, what does surprise is that 100% of the teachers in the study are in agreement.

Elementary school teachers in schools that are serviced by a shared-time SLMS do not use the SLMC for projects and research due to lack of time and the fact that the SLMS is not available every day. Middle school teachers indicated greatest usage of the SLMC. At the high school level 26% of the teachers had an interesting reason for not using the SLMC.

- Business education teachers have Internet accessibility in their rooms.
- Time/Schedule constraints
- Classes too large to "keep track of them" in the SLMC
- Teacher's lack of skills in using the SLMC resources
- All prep research done at home
- Since the students did research projects in junior year, teacher is trying to create "independent researchers" of them in their senior year

6. Other Results

Two interesting results surfaced:

- Teachers have no idea what the term Information Literacy means

They understand the importance of access, location, evaluation and use of information...they do not think of that as Information Literacy!

- The personality and skills of the School Library Media Specialist cannot be separated from the perception of the value of the program.

7. Anecdotal Information

I think the real eye-opener was the fact that teachers do not know the meaning of Information Literacy. We all believe that we were being very clear in articulating that this is the piece that separates the SLMC from Technology classes. Apparently, we have not done this as well as we thought. In New Jersey, this presents a very big problem. Core Curriculum Content Standard #8 is Technology and Information Literacy. State DOE presentations I attended have only addressed the domain of the technology/business

teachers. Information Literacy has been absorbed into that department. If we do not clearly state our role in accessing, locating, evaluating, and using information we can clearly be placed out of the box!

This project also spoke very loudly to the problem of shared-school library media specialists. Most of the elementary teachers taking part in the project recognize the difference between a part-time and full-time program. We have succeeded in creating strong advocates for our program at the elementary level.

Teachers at all levels indicated the need for more computers in the SLMC. As a result, we have seen individual school principals utilizing building funds to increase the number of computers in the school library media center.

Other grant related activities include:

- Article for Knowledge Quest explaining purpose of the project and identifying the funding agency
- Presentation at the EMAnj Fall Conference explaining purpose, methodology, and preliminary findings of project
- January presentation at the NJ School Administrators Association Techspo conference explaining the role of the SLMS in technology and information literacy

Our last interview will not be taking place until the end of April, beginning of May. We will offer the results of that interview once it is complete.

8. Appendices

- a) Written Survey to targeted faculty
- b) Post-Survey Interview Questions
- c) Sample journal entries from Colonia High School
- d) Presentation at EMAnj
- e) Sample of activity report and teacher handouts